

By Rema Nagarajan

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International rights bodies such as Amnesty International and UNHCR, too, have repeatedly castigated the Bangladesh government for its treatment of minorities. Even the **United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF)** slammed Dhaka in 2006 for continuous persecution of minority Hindus.

Historically, though, Bangladesh was founded as a secular republic in 1971. However, Islam was declared the state religion after the military takeover in the 1980s. The constitution, of course, guarantees the right to practice and propagate all religions.